



[Murillo.]

SAINT JOSEPH
(Feast of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, 24th April.)



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ÁP OTEANGA FÉIN.

LANGUAGE Week has again prominently placed before the Irish people the momentous task which lies to their hand. Until recent years the importance of the language as the chief factor of national life was too scantily recognised by our own people. Some, indeed, saw and deplored the magnitude of Ireland's loss, and laboured with heroic earnestness to retrieve it. Their efforts were not in vain; the Gaelic League achieved a work worthy of all praise. While it made its way throughout the country, gradually drawing to its bosom the more ardent spirits, there were numbers who merely touched the hem of its garment. The latter felt that Ireland ought to speak her own language, but their consciousness of what our

national tongue really meant to our land was too vague to exert them to any genuine co-operation in making an Irish-speaking Ireland. The mists have at length been lifted and Ireland's language is clearly perceived as essential to her national life. This fine realisation of the end of the language movement has sent a new vitality coursing through the veins of the Gaelic League. Many who until recently were insensible or indifferent to its value are now numbered among the most zealous in its cause. Its branches continue to spread and its class-halls are filled with students whose earnestness foretells success. Those who yearn for an Irish-speaking Ireland naturally ask will this new-born enthusiasm merely strut and fret its hour and pass away, or will it abide, gathering strength until their aspirations are realised. We are on the side of the optimist. The Irish people feel now as they have never felt before all that is comprised in the loss of their language. That language enshrines their best traditions and their loftiest ideals. To abandon it for a tongue not their own is to live in a foreign atmosphere, to sacrifice the distinctive character of their nationality; to become dé-Irishised. With the preservation or the loss of her language Ireland's soul will survive or perish. All this is now apprehended, and lies with ourselves to keep the impression fresh and vigorous. We should regard our responsibility towards the language as individual, and labour personally for its speedy and complete revival. For those to whom it is possible, its acquirement should be their first aim; personal influence should be used to arouse similar efforts in others, and the various projects of the Gaelic League should obtain our whole-hearted co-operation.

* * * * * In a recent issue of the English weekly *Everyman* a writer contrasted Germany's treatment of Poland with England's treatment of Ireland—needless to say, much to the disadvantage of Germany. Among other things the reader is informed that "Germany has done her best to abolish the use of the Polish language; instruction in the Irish language, on the other hand, has been subsidised by England." Has not England done her best to abolish the use of the Irish language? One of the clauses of the Statute of Kilkenny was designed with that purpose, and its failure to attain its end certainly could not be imputed to its legislators. The present subsidy—by no means over-generous—is but a very thin veil concealing an antagonism as bitter as ever. The conditions imposed by the National Board of Education on the teaching of Irish make any solid knowledge of the language impossible to the children in their schools. The enmity which in this case masquerades as friendship is often seen in undisguised hostility. To print one's name in one's own language does not appear to be a very criminal action. Our enlightened rulers think otherwise. It is not so long ago since an Irishman was brought before a court in Ireland and fined because he had his name printed on his cart in Irish! Time has changed the method of attack, but means to check the progress of the language, and if possible to destroy it, have not yet ceased to be employed.

The Cinema Craze.

FOR the reason that it is usually so spontaneous and so non-obvious at the moment, implicit condemnation of anything is often more deadly than a formal and explicit denunciation. Hardly a more damning comment on the picture-house can be expressed than that very usual comparison of the institution with the spasmodic and short-lived roller-skating rink. Crazes can never be very wholesome, and how often does one hear people say: "Oh, pictures are just like skating. They are nothing more than a craze, and they'll die out as the rinks died out." Herein lies palpable evidence that the plea of educational utility so often and so strenuously made on behalf of the cinema is not taken with any degree of seriousness by the vast majority of people. When one thinks of the present-day level of much of the fare provided by the "revue" producing theatres one feels that a comparison of the cinema with the stage would not be over-flattering, but when the more obvious similitude is with the skating-rink——!

The picture-house is fortunate neither in its most dogged denouncers nor its loudest defenders. Those who bang the sledge-hammer of denunciation everlasting on its glittering shows forget that it has a little in its favour, while on the other hand, its apologists more often than not try to buttress their position by simply saying that everything the decriers of the film said was not true. An over-zealous demolisher fires off so many missiles that his position is almost bound to be jeopardised when the opponent hurtles back some of his own weapons on his head. Nothing encourages the doubtful so much as injudicious condemnation of it, for let even one argument of the critic be shown to be ill-founded, and hosts are ready to take it for granted that all his objections have an unstable foundation. Better leave truth to speak for itself than utter indefensible or thoughtless accusations against even dubious institutions.

Heated criticism of the cinema has been much in evidence of late, and many papers have been giving a good deal of space to the subject. And, first of all, I would like to deal with one of the defenders of the picture-house who has been wielding his cudgel in a weekly journal, since some judicial folk assert that it is a much better practice to hear the defendant's side of the story first and listen to his accusers afterwards.

The writer leads off by saying that in his young days it was customary to ascribe every instance of juvenile wrong-

doing to the demoralising effect of the "Penny Dreadful." The passage of time has only altered the case inasmuch that now the root of all evil is the picture-house. Now, nobody is foolish enough to say that every wicked boy is such because of his visits to what in American jargon are hideously named "movies." But time and again it has been proved that youths have been shown many of the methods of the wrong-doer by the screens which depict incidents of crime and intrigue, and have gone away but to practise what the villain on the film did before their eyes. The great objection to pictures which display acts of cruelty, deceit, studied revenge, and so on, is that the audience is shown the ways and the details of the wrong-doer in such a manner that their admiration for the cleverness of the scoundrel often swamps the sense of disgust which they know they ought to have for such perverted ability. Pretty invariably, too, the good man or woman is depicted as a mawkish or "goody-goody" type.

Here is how the over-zealous defender of the cinema oversteps the mark: "Every possible crime is attributed to the existence of the cinematograph. Every cause of juvenile wrong-doing is put down to the existence of moving pictures. We are asked to believe that the average cinema is a den of iniquity, in which crime is encouraged and moral corruption is accelerated." We are asked to believe nothing of the kind! After all, no picture-house that was wholly bad could survive commercially for any considerable length, but it is not the glaringly evil pictures that do the harm. Tolerant and spineless as is the public, the avowedly wicked gets short shrift. But it is into the insidiously suggestive film that most danger surreptitiously sneaks. Into how many of the "comics" do not vulgarity and veiled indecency find their easy way? They come as the slimy seeds that in their noxious budding prepare the way for the more palpable, the more brazen.

Listen to what the champion of the cinema has to say to those who fight for clean amusements. "I think," he smugly writes, "there is not the slightest doubt as to what is at the root of these attacks. It is the hatred of cheap amusements. There are many people, unfortunately, who cannot bear the idea of common people enjoying themselves. They regard pleasure as a sin. If they had their way the sky would not be blue, and such sensuous delights as the colour or the scent of flowers would never have come into existence." What unblushing rubbish! When that is the best he can say, it looks as if our champion was in a bad way. Fancy anyone coming out of an hotel after a seven-o'clock eight-course dinner denouncing bakers because they pandered to the tastes of the populace by supplying half-penny buns for hungry ragamuffins! And you can think of other similes for yourselves. The statement is so puerilely laughable that one marvels at the mind which thought of it.

And, forsooth, "simple sweethearts" is one of the chief "evils" denounced as taking place in picture-palaces. The cinema defender must be a very simple person, simpler even than the sweethearts which he would so like to encourage in that "darkness, which is the devil's day." He even waxes furious over the complaint of a Scottish minister of religion who had the audacity to denounce the levity of his congregation, which, "instead of listening to his dull ministrations"—to quote the "good in all things" film puffer—preferred enjoyments more to their liking. The guileless gentleman waxes sarcastic at what he reckons the expense of the pleaders for purity in life through all its phases:—"One can imagine how the very sight of a portal to be entered for threepence or sixpence fills them with bitterness. That a young man and a young woman should be able to sit for hours watching a love story unfold itself on the screen! Horrible!" With the well-known method of the one patching up a weak case he tries to draw attention from the real issue—pretending to believe that it is the use, instead of the abuse, that is challenged. Protest against objectionable films, and lo! you are asked if you never like to see people enjoying themselves? That argument is too like the way of the child who tells his mother that she wants to starve him, because she has forbidden him some dainty or other which she knows from experience would be more injurious than otherwise.

As a final broadside, this is fired at us:—"The moving picture is one of the most magnificent contributions which science has made to education and enlightenment. To denounce it is merely stupid." That should settle the matter, for is it not a horrible thought that an anonymous journalist should scream "stupid" after one? But it is no harm to repeat that this writer, when replying to many who have denounced certain unwholesome features of the picture-palace goes on the dishonest assumption that the film in all its aspects has been attacked. Many people think that such rubbish should be allowed to go its way unnoticed, but it is the sort of trash which is dished up to the readers of a journal with a very wide circulation—playing on the blatant note of "The People against Their Traders and Would-be Oppressors" in every line.

The percentage of people who go to a cinema with a notion in the back of their heads that instruction or enlightenment is to result therefrom is very small indeed, and in any case, these institutions make no claim or pretension that portion of their aim is to elevate or to instruct. The keynote of the picture-house is sensation—if they can promise to pile one on top of another they glaringly tell you so. Their patrons are largely the people whose thinking powers prefer rest to activity, for whom the theatre is too much of a strain—for it is a poor play after all that does not require some concentration of thought to follow it properly. The appeal of the

moving-picture is primarily to the type of mind which prefers to witness action rather than follow thought. The average play cannot be shown on the screen with effect—there is a limit to what facial action and dumb show can effectively portray. Hence the pictures have to fall back upon exaggeration of gesture and action, and for plots must often seek the ultra-dramatic and the crudely grotesque.

Take the plot of an average "screaming comic." It starts—the plot of a "comic" does not really make much difference for there usually isn't any!—say, with a frowsy-looking wife impressing on her undersized lord and master the fact that the time has at last come when he must work. He shuffles out after an unavailing protestation, and after he has gone some yards manages to catch a burglar who is escaping with his spoils. The police are hot in pursuit, but before they come on the scene, the law-breaker has beaten his captor, made the latter change clothes with him, and escaped. Naturally the seeker for work flees before the half-score of chasing policemen, who take him for the culprit, mounts the first bicycle he meets, dashes into every object in the line of his race, smashes up apple-women's stalls, tumbles old gentlemen in the roadway, runs into shop-windows, gets beaten grimly by an infuriated mob, and still holds out gaily on his bicycle with about fifty people in pursuit of him. By this time, most of the audience are about sick of the running amuck business—for one "comic" is very like another in this respect—so the fugitive is at last captured by the mob. The police come up, the lazy one starts to explain, and suddenly dashes off from the grips of five stalwart custodians. But he does not simply try to get away—his plunge was caused by a glimpse of the real burglar still on the run. He captures the culprit, hands him over to the police, and then up comes the personage whose house had been robbed. He hands the hero—by this time everybody knows that the lazy one is the hero—a roll of notes as a small token of his thanks, looks sarcastically at the policemen, and marches away. Then home with the work-seeker, who, with laconic ease, doles out to his wife a few bank-notes from "his first day's pay," while the gallery applauds unto hoarseness.

How piffling it all is, but who that visits the cinema does not know the class of film I mean? It is a poor sort of amusement, but it is typical of much of the humour of the picture-palace. It gives an impossible view of life to a young receptive mind incapable of differentiating between the ludicrous and the funny.

In any case, the ordinary cinema is no place for children. The place is a bad school-room, with its smoke-reeking atmosphere, its darkened hall, and its flickering, eye-straining screen. Children cannot associate it with instruction, for to their minds it stands for something totally different—excitement in another world to their own.

The picture-house is frankly a resort of the unthinking and those who have a couple of hours to while away. Provided it interests and amuses in a harmless way we should leave its wholesale denunciation in other hands. But its great danger is the vulgar, the suggestive, film, which often tries to cloak indecency under a rank veil of alleged humour. It needs watching with care, for if an audience stands a first instalment of the dubious, or acclaims a mildly unpleasant picture, it will find itself presented with a stronger version of the "mixture" next time. No manager or proprietor will display films of doubtful morality—unless they pay. And it is for the audience to see that they do not pay.

THOMAS KELLY.

Love's Sacrifice.

Beyond the woods and up the heather heights
Where golden flowers greet the dawning sheen,
A mind is waked beneath a shadow'd light
And mystic sounds of harps within the green.

And soft and low where lonely willows sigh
It steals across the bogmint of the West,
The little shamrocks kiss it passing by,
They know the voice and feel the throbbing breast.

To North and South where darksome billows roll,
A magic whisper breaks its scented breath,
A spirit song that speeds from soul to soul
And sings of love unconquer'd e'en in death.

They heed and hear, the fairest, bravest, best,
A bloodstain'd road to cross. O Muir is Truag.
The valley bells no longer wake their rest,
For Mother Erin they have died for you.

NORA J. MURRAY.

The Joint Lease.

By P. IVERS-RIGNEY.

PADRAIG RAINY crossing his tidily-kept farmyard stopped to speak to the thatcher then engaged in giving the finishing touches to the neat coat the roof had just received; big and handsome, he was of that good-natured, courteous type who loved to have the word of good fellowship for all.

"You'll have us comfortable before the change, a Veehil."

"That I will, a Fawdrig, and 'tis thinking I am the same change won't be long in coming."

"The wind is shifting sure enough; 'tis lucky we were to get you so soon."

"A spell of rain would do no harm now, after all the fine weather; though 'tis fine and grand the country is looking, praise be to God. I never saw it look so good."

"I was just remarking the same thing as I came along to dinner. You'll be coming in, a Veehil?"

Meehal did not answer.

Looking up, Padraig could see the thatcher gazing earnestly at some objects moving at the entrance to the long, narrow, straggling boreen that led from the public road to the farmhouse.

"What is it, a Veehil?"

"Faith, I think they're north-country women, sure enough," answered the thatcher absent-mindedly.

Mounting a few steps of the ladder, the farmer was able to see two figures robed in long hooded cloaks, common in some parts of Ireland, but rarely seen in the townland of Ballyglean.

"They're north-country women beyond a doubt, and 'tis many the day since I saw one of them," corroborated he.

"The stories I heard must have been true, so," said Meehal reflectively.

"What stories?" queried Rainey.

"Yeh, nothing! Pishogues!"

"Even so, a Veehil! Let us hear it."

"They say every farmer in Ballyglean will be cleared out before twelve months."

Padraig's laugh in answer was dry and mirthless. Queer things had been done in Ireland; the eviction demon's visits had often come with terrible unexpectedness, leaving behind the big, ominous, blood-stained track.

Padraig, to be sure, had been a quarter of a century in peaceful Ballyglean, had paid his rent promptly, and was

secure by what he considered a comparatively satisfactory lease, but—well, he could not really joke on matters dealing with eviction.

"Some of their prophecies came true, sure enough," added the farmer thoughtfully.

"They say the devil fights for his own," commented the thatcher, descending the ladder, and moving across the yard in the direction of the kitchen.

"We'll have God to fight for us then," said Padraig.

The subject was changed and both adopted a livelier tone as they entered the house, where they were greeted by the mistress of the farmstead and her pretty daughter.

"Did you hear that Dick Cashman is looking out, ma'am?" queried the thatcher during the dinner chat.

"All joking aside, Veehil?"

"It's dead earnest for Dick, ma'am."

"The best of good luck to him," added mother and daughter in a burst of merriment. "Sure 'twill be hard to match him."

"And by all I hear, ma'am, equally hard to please him."

"Ah, well, he's not a bad class of man," interjected Rainey, wishing to say a good word for a neighbouring farmer little respected in the locality.

A sudden look which Meehal gave at Mary, the daughter, did not pass unnoticed by Padraig, who changed the conversation.

When they had gone out again, the north-country women were entering the farmyard.

"Welcome, good women!" saluted Rainey.

"And prosperity to you and yours, true-hearted, generous man, and good luck to the honest man upon the roof. 'Tis sorrowful and sad is this our last journey to Ballyglean."

"God forbid me or mine would ever close the door on the poor."

"Next year but the homes of the cattle will be in Ballyglean. Movrone! 'Tis the sad—"

"I beg of you, good women, not to tell any bad news to my wife or daughter."

Padraig went back to his work more heavy-hearted than he had been for many a day. He was a level-headed, intelligent man knowing that in those days there was practically no such thing as security of tenure. To be sure, his present landlord had never shown great harshness, in some cases was even sympathetic, and had given his tenants a lease of their farms.

The nature of this lease had now and then been a cause of disturbance to Padraig. It was a joint lease, and so long as the ten farmers occupying Ballyglean paid their rent promptly, then so long had they security of tenure. When one failed all must suffer.

Bad as this lease was, it had certain advantages over the

mere tenant-at-will system; and up to the present the tenants on the Ballyglean estate had been fortunate. Their land was good; the seasons, in general, favourable, and all were able to meet the rent demand promptly.

Beyond the strange warning of the north-country women, Padraig could see nothing to disturb his equanimity.

In his mental survey of the situation he ran over the various characters of the co-tenants. His mind dwelt on Dick Cashman, a man industrious and covetous, but one who had so far paid his rent with unfailing regularity.

Padraig's mind came back to the talk of Meehal, the thatcher, who was generally well posted in parochial matters. Meehal had intimated that Dick may not pass the Rainey household in his search for a wife. If so there would be trouble ahead, for the idea of a marriage between Cashman and the pretty, sweet-tempered Mary could only be classed as absurdly ridiculous.

There only remained to wait and hope that Dick's choice might fall elsewhere.

Such was not to be.

Within a few days a match-maker came from Dick, and was politely but firmly refused.

Mary could not see the matter but in the light of a huge joke, and great was her merriment on the subject being mentioned.

Rainey himself did his best to present things in as favourable a light as circumstances would permit, but Dick was not satisfied.

As time went by fears were lessened, and he was hoping things had again commenced to run in the usual way. There were some rumours of Dick having turned his wife-searching attentions in another direction; and he had also, much to Padraig's delight, accepted the customary help of his neighbours in his busy times.

But Cashman was simply maturing his wicked designs, and this lulling of fears was part of his plot.

When the half-year ended he tendered a petition for reduction of rent, and refused to pay till his request had been granted.

The landlord accepted the ultimatum and prepared to put the force of the law into action.

Notices to quit were served on all the tenants on the Ballyglean estate, and time proved the degree inexorable. Petitions and peace offerings were useless.

The terrible day of eviction drew near with heart-rending rapidity. For preceding days the unhappy tenants rambled about the farms their care had made so prosperous as if trying to take a mental impression that would afterwards be readily recalled.

Sometimes despair would give way to a wave of wild passion which subsided on calmer moments coming.

Bailiffs, police, and agent came heedless of the cries of women and children. From farm to farm they went, meeting resistance of varying magnitude, flinging out tenants, furniture, and stock with marked contempt.

Padraig went out with the rest. Poor Mary was there, no longer the happy, buoyant girl, for she blamed herself for all the woe of Ballyglean. No one in such misery spoke harshly to her. She had done as they would do. None of their daughters would have married him who had fled Judas-like from the presence his wickedness had caused.

The disjointed conversation of the evicted gathered on the roadside rambled from expressions of misery to resistance.

At one time a wave of fury swept through the throng who witnessed a noticeably heartless act. Hands were clenched, stout sticks convulsively grasped, and likely the long pent-up feeling of the patient sufferers would have found vent in emphatic protest had not their good priest been there to cheer them by his words, to soften their just anger.

"Be patient as you are," counselled he. "'Tis a big, big trial. God in His mercy knows how big. Bear it for His sake. Mark my words, my children; let them cheer you in this hour of desolation. Your descendants will be owners of Ballyglean when those of your enemies have not where to lay their heads."

Neighbours came to offer shelter to the dispossessed.

The heavy-hearted priest was the last to go.

So dispersed the once-happy tenants; some to eke out a miserable existence in far-off lands; some to live a life of dependency on strangers; all to brood on past wrongs, and never to forget the terrible eviction day.

Padraig fared better than many.

A young farmer, Ned Ryan, from a neighbouring parish, accompanied by his father and mother, came to offer them shelter.

"Mary and I," said Ned, explanatorily, "know each other this long time, and perhaps only for me she'd have accepted that poor fellow, Cashman. I meant not to let this year go without calling over to ask her father and mother's permission, for I've already asked herself."

"And 'tis the hearty welcome we'll give her and her good father and mother," interjected Mr. and Mrs. Ryan.

In time all protestations were broken down, and Mary married the man she loved.

His new-found happiness could not efface past trouble from the mind of Padraig, who, proud-spirited that he was, but poorly enjoyed the happy home so providentially given.

He watched his grand-children grow up about him; he saw the happy loving light that so often beamed in Mary's eye; he knew how anxious all were to make him and his wife so contented that the past would be at most but a memory of a hideous dream.

Death came among them; Ned's mother; Ned's father; Mary's mother.

Padraig lived on to witness the remaining years of the blood-bespattered land struggle, the slow passing of the lowering eviction clouds, the first rays of light through the gloom, the victory of the Irish Land Acts, and the relief of those who had been wounded in the dreary fight.

The owner of Ballyglean—son of the evictor—sold his estate, and the evicted or their descendants were reinstated.

It was the happy day for Padraig and for them.

Money was advanced to purchase stock and build houses to replace those so ruthlessly levelled.

One fine evening as Padraig entered the yard he found the slater giving the finishing touches to the roof of a substantial dwelling-house built on the site of the old one.

Thoughts of that day long past when he had Meehal, the thatcher, at work came to him. Mechanically he turned to the old boreen, still unchanged.

The good old priest of Ballyglean, still happily and wisely guiding the ecclesiastical destinies of his parish, was approaching.

"Putting on the finishing touches, a Fawdrig?"

"Yes, indeed, your reverence, and 'tis glad I am. Myself and Mary's son and daughter will soon be living here."

"And glad I am too, a Fawdrig."

"'Tis proud I am to be able to leave the place to one of my own, and proud I am to be able to die in Ballyglean, though 'tis no bad word I can say against Ned Ryan."

"He's a good fellow, a Fawdrig."

"You may say that, Father."

"He'll have the reward for it, a Fawdrig."

"Did you hear, Father, that the former landlord of Ballyglean killed himself?"

"So the morning's paper states. He squandered all he had, and couldn't face poverty. Poor fellow! Gambling is a terrible vice. I'll be able to have a station here soon, a Fawdrig?"

"'Tis my great wish to welcome you, Father, and the neighbours, as I used to do years ago; sure 'tisn't often I'll be able to do so."

"We're not so old, a Fawdrig. Eighty years is nothing. Come, I'll walk you to the top of the boreen."

Laughingly the two octogenarians, with the ever young and innocent hearts, briskly stepped forward, knowing the eviction clouds had passed for ever from their beloved Ballyglean.

At Cork.

[August, 1916.]

In Cork I land : it is no stranger city
Where through I roam ;
Tho' ne'er before have I set foot in Erin,
I have come home.

Yea, as in dreams the exile home returneth
O'er land and sea,
The sounds of home, the words of home surround me
Beside the Lee.

Now distant Chester seemeth strange and foreign ;
For other there
Is England from what Shropshire, Suffolk taught me
In days that were,

That in the afterglow of calm tradition
And quiet scenes,
Preserve what England was ere yet her children
Obey'd machines.

What Shropshire was before my England basely
Her faith forswore
Is living yet in Erin's welcome city,
Yet—something more,

Yea, something calls me like a friend forgotten,
A long-lost face.

Surely there thrills within my veins this moment
The call of race ?

Yea, surely somehow in the clash of conquest,
Of raid and flight,
Of settlement and seizure in the ages'
Recordless night,

My fathers whom I know not have transmitted
A Gaelic strain,
Their wedlock dower, destin'd to awaken
In me again.

Could I have chosen whom I would for fathers
My choice would be
To claim from one who spurn'd the famine pottage
My pedigree.

That Gael and Saxon yet may league together
As neighbour friends
In bands of federation, be my prayer
Until life ends.

H. E. G. ROPE.

The Resurrection.

THE dreadful week, made for ever memorable by the most awful day the world has ever seen, at length came to a close. This day, for always, afterwards to be called Good Friday, saw our dear Lord laid in His grave and His sorrowing friends return sadly to their respective homes. Jerusalem talked in dread whispers of the mysterious occurrences that happened when Jesus died. Her people knew not what to think. Sorely troubled in mind and heart at the murder they had committed, many, seeing those friends of Jesus pass their doors from His funeral, would, doubtless, have been glad to speak with them, and hear what they had to say, in explanation of the day's fearful and fitful happenings. But the nameless sorrow in their faces peremptorily forbade such freedom, and they were left alone in their grief. It would seem that the promise Jesus had made them of rising again the third day was not present to their memory. They only thought that He whom they loved was dead—that now there was an end to all their sweet hopes and beautiful dreams—aye, they may, indeed, in the unreasoning excess of grief, have thought that He had made a mistake, that, somehow, He Himself had been deceived, and could not do all He had led them to believe. But, if faith was shaken, love remained firm. This they would show to Him, dead, since they could not do it living. The last to leave the tomb of Jesus, and the first to return, were the brave and loving women of Galilee. Last of all, Magdalen and two companions. When these returned to Jerusalem it was too late to buy what they wanted for the embalming. They had to wait until after the rest of the Sabbath. But by midnight of Saturday all was in readiness, and early on Sunday morning, the first day of the week, they were without the city walls, hastening with eager steps to the holy sepulchre. Little thought they of what awaited them. They were anxious as to how the stone could be removed from the mouth of the sepulchre. But it was in subdued and reverent tones they spoke of it. The sacredness of their mission made conversation unseemly. What surprise, then, was theirs when, on arriving at the tomb, they found the stone rolled away, for it was very large, and entering, they found an angel seated. He bore the outward aspect of a young man, clothed in white raiment. Naturally they were affrighted. But he spoke to them and calmed their fears. "Be not affrighted," he said; "you seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him."—Mark 16, 6.

These words of the angel are true. Were they not true, all our faith would be vain. But we know they are true. We see their truth by the strongest of all lights—the light of faith. But apart from the conviction this light brings, their truth is easily proved. Jesus has taken care of this. During His mortal life He left His power unused when there was question only of His own convenience. He was always but too ready to exercise it to save inconvenience to others. This was also the character of our risen Saviour. It ought to have been enough for the apostles and disciples and us all to know that He said He would rise again on the third day. Who so bold as to question the fulfilment of His promise! But this was not sufficient for Jesus. For the world's sake, which He loved so well as to die for it, He has so acted Himself, and so ordered or permitted by His providence the conduct of others that of all the facts of ancient history, there is not one so credibly attested as is this of His resurrection. Magdalen did not go forward to the empty tomb with the other women. She did not then hear the angel's words of consolation. As soon as she caught sight of it, tenantless, she made all haste back to Jerusalem. Beyond all doubt, she thought, His tomb has been violated. His body has been abandoned to His enemies. Even then she did not think of the alternative—that He had fulfilled His promise and had risen. At once she sought out the beloved disciple and Peter. They have taken away the Lord, she told them, and we know not where they have put Him. Having delivered her message, she at once hurried back to the sepulchre. Here, she finds now, no trace of her companions. They had already been addressed by the angel, and had heard the glorious news of Jesus' resurrection. They were told to apprise Peter and the disciples, and to say also that He would keep His promise of going before them into Galilee. Transported with fear and great joy, they had just hurried away, when Peter and John arrived almost breathless on the scene. These believed on the testimony of the angel as made known to them by the holy women. But to Magdalen was reserved the first sight of the risen Jesus. The two apostles, after their examination of the empty tomb, straightway returned to their homes, marvelling much over this which had come to pass. But Mary stayed wandering about the tomb again and again, peering through her tears into its dark recesses. As she looks and weeps suddenly she sees two angels, all in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been laid. "Woman," they say, "why weepest thou?" "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." But in the same instant, she is conscious of a Presence behind her, and half-turned round, she hears It say: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" It is the gardener, she thinks, quite a reasonable mistake at that hour of the morning, seven o'clock. "Per-

haps he may have taken away the body to protect it from insult." "Sir," she made answer, "if you have taken Him hence, tell me where you have laid Him; I will go and carry Him away." "Mary." It was Jesus who spoke, and she recognised His voice. "Master." She would have clung to Him, lovingly, longingly, aye, for ever. But Jesus quieted her affectionate enthusiasm, reminded her she would see Him again before His Ascension, and sent her rejoicing with His message to the apostles. After this the appearances of Jesus follow in quick succession. Peter and John had not yet gone to the other disciples, so that when Magdalen went to deliver the Lord's message she found them mourning and in tears. Even while she passionately tries to make them believe her story, another band of women is fast approaching the tomb, on the same errand as the former. On seeing the empty tomb, they made greater haste, and entered it with great wonder and greater fear. All at once two angels stood by them. "Why seek ye," they said, "the living amongst the dead? He is no longer here. He is risen. Remember that which He said unto you, when He was yet in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinners and crucified, and the third day rise again.'" Hastening along the garden to bear the news to the eleven, they were met by Jesus Himself. "Hail," He said to them. They kissed His feet and all trembling worshipped Him. "Fear not," He said, "go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee; it is there they shall see me." Towards evening that same day, He appeared to two disciples, on their way to Emmaus. These were not apostles. It is an oft-told tale—how He explained the Scriptures to them—how their hearts burned within them whilst He spoke—how He consented to sit with them at table, and how, at length, they knew Him, in the breaking of bread. After that He appeared to Simon, then to ten of the apostles at once, taking care to convince them that He was truly alive—that it was not His Ghost they saw: "Touch and consider that a spirit has neither flesh nor bones as you see that I have." One last sign to convince them beyond all doubt. "Have you anything to eat?" He asks, and they give Him, and in their presence He eats some roasted fish and some honey-comb. Then He distributed to them the fragments. Peace being thus restored to their troubled spirits, He breathes upon them, and says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven, whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." Eight days afterwards He appeared again to the apostles. This time Thomas was with them. Our Lord shows how well He knows the conditions of His belief. "Put in thy finger hither and see My hands," He saith to him, "and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side, and be not faithless but believing."

The apostles were the first to obey His command to go to

Galilee. Shortly after this, seven of them found themselves on the shores of the Lake of Genesareth. Without the means now of buying food, they went to fish. It was then evening, and, as on another memorable occasion, they laboured all the night fruitlessly. At dawn they were still dragging along near the bank, when they saw a man standing on the shore. "Children," He said, "have you anything to eat?" It was Jesus. But they did not know Him. They answered "No." "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you shall find." They did so, and were unable, so loaded was it with fish, to draw it up again. At this sign which they knew well, John said to Peter: "It is the Lord," and Peter sprang into the lake to get the sooner to Jesus. The other apostles followed in the boat. When they stepped on shore they found a fire already lighted, and some fish cooking. "Bring," Jesus said, "some of the fishes you have caught," and some being brought and cooked, Jesus made them sit down, and stepping forward Himself, He served them with the bread and the meats. Upon this occasion by the shores of Genesareth, He exacted from St. Peter his three professions of love, and commanded him to feed His sheep and His lambs. It was now necessary He should fulfil His promise of appearing to all the brethren: "Go and tell my brethren to go into Galilee; it is there they shall see Me." This had been the burden of the message entrusted to Magdalen and the other pious women. He had designated a mountain for this first assemblage of Christians. Hither came not only the apostles, but also all the brethren that Judea, Jerusalem, and Galilee could muster. St. Paul tells us there were more than five hundred. When Jesus appeared the apostles fell down before Him. But amongst the others there were some who still doubted. Neither the voice from the tomb that had summoned them thither nor the sight of the apostles worshipping their Master, could quite chase from their minds trouble and anxiety. They had seen Him dead. Now they saw Him walking towards them alive. What did it all mean? Drawing near, He spoke to them. His voice was the same sweet and gentle one they knew and loved so well. It calmed their fears and filled them with a holy joy. "All power," He saith, "hath been given me in heaven and upon earth. Go, then, and teach all nations; baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teach them to keep all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the ages." This was one of many manifestations which Jesus made of Himself during those days. The forty days after the resurrection were now drawing to a close. Warned by our divine Lord the apostles returned to Jerusalem. Here, in that ever holy upper chamber, our Lord gathered them around Him for the last time, and whilst He was "eating with them," He bade

them not to leave Jerusalem, but to await the Father's promise. Then He rose up and walked towards the Mount of Olives. His apostles followed, and when they were come to the brow of a hill that marks the outskirts of Bethany, and the outer limits of Jerusalem, Jesus stood still, and lifting up His divine hands, began to bless His apostles, and, lo, whilst He was blessing them, He was raised up above the mountain-tops. A cloud caught Him away out of their sight, and He disappeared in the blue depths of the sky.

Yes, our dear Lord took great care to prove to the world in His Own Person that He was truly risen. Did the apostles bear Him witness? They did—even unto death. They preached the resurrection. It was the burden of all their sermons in the beginning. They rightly believed that if once the resurrection of Jesus was admitted Christianity was established. That the Scripture may be fulfilled one must be chosen in the room of Judas. But St. Peter insists upon him being one who can be a witness of the resurrection. The resurrection was the subject of St. Peter's first sermon. Three thousand were converted by it. He preached the same continually to his Jewish brethren. St. Paul preached the same great and luminous fact. He preached it in the marketplace of Athens, and he preached it in the Areopagus. Philip preached it. John preached it. All the apostles preached it. The dominant idea they have of themselves is that they are witnesses of the resurrection. Moreover, it is at the peril of their lives they do this. According to St. Chrysostom this is the most convincing proof of the resurrection. What were they aiming at by their preaching? Why, they were trying to overthrow beliefs the most sacred, and to overcome prejudices the most bitter. They were grappling with a nation's pride, and that nation the Jewish—of all nations the most tenacious of its traditions. Could the dead Body of Jesus have been produced, or could its ashes have been shown, with the slightest appearance of truth, the circumstance would have been eagerly seized upon by St. Peter's converts to discredit St. Peter's preaching. They would have had no chance whatever—these poor, ignorant men, without money or influence or position, they would have had no chance whatever of persuading rich and poor, learned and unlearned alike, of a lie, and such a lie, as the rising from the tomb of a dead man. But, suppose for a moment that, for some inconceivable reason, they could successfully deceive, what good would it have done them, if in truth, Jesus were not truly risen? Could they hope for a new life from Him, if He were dead? He had promised them He would rise again. If He did not or could not keep this promise, could they hope He would be more faithful to His other promises? Were it not the wildest of foolish madnesses to suffer whips and stonings and imprisonment and contempt and hunger and death—all to uphold a lie; from

which no good could possibly accrue to themselves or to others? Yet, were Christ not truly risen, all this would be meant by the preaching of the apostles. Yea, much more would be meant. It would mean that they actually had the hardihood to appeal to the Almighty to attest the truth of their doctrine by miracles, and that they had the blasphemous success of seducing the God of Truth to become a partner in their fraud, by acceding to their request.

But though the testimony of the apostles is great—so great as to put the truth beyond question, yet the conduct of Jesus' enemies is such as to afford one other great convincing proof of His resurrection. This derives greater cogency from the fact that it is given by His enemies. It arose from the great anxiety of the priests and ancients of Israel to propagate a lie and to conceal the truth. This induced a mistake which covers them with well-merited ridicule and contempt. They thought that once Jesus was dead, all the turmoil and anxiety in their hearts would be appeased. No more would they be tortured by envy and jealousy. The people would cease to remember Him, except as an impostor. What annoyed them most in Jesus was His power of attracting the people. Now it would be in terms of self-congratulation they would refer to Him, and of triumphant condescension to the ignorant multitude whom their superior knowledge had saved from the wiles of an impostor. All this they hoped for. But Jesus was scarcely laid in His grave when they were made more than ever anxious and troubled. They remembered His prediction. Had He not said that He would rise from the dead? Once they had asked Him for a sign. Jesus said He would give them one sign—the sign of Jonas the prophet—the sign of him who, buried three days beneath the waves, emerged to a fuller life. These recollections permitted them no rest. At length they went to Pilate and made known their fears. "We have just remembered," they said, "that this impostor whilst He still lived said, 'After three days I will rise again.' Give orders therefore that the sepulchre be guarded until the third day, for fear that His disciples should come and steal Him away, and tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead.' For then the last error would be worse than the first," and they went and sealed the stone and stationed before it their guard of Roman soldiers. Now, these Roman soldiers happened to see the vision vouchsafed to the three women of Galilee. They saw the angel of the Lord descend from heaven, and drawing nigh roll back the stone that blocked the mouth of the sepulchre. They saw his garments of dazzling whiteness. They felt the shock of the earthquake. Brave men were these Roman legionaries—strangers to fear—men who had fought in many a hard-won battle, and to whom it would have been dire disgrace to flee before an enemy. But they are now seized with such terror that they fall down like dead men, and as soon as may be,

one and all fly back to Jerusalem. And the chief-priests and ancients of Israel—those anxious seekers after truth—those highly-placed moralists and teachers of God's people—what is their conduct when they hear the story of the affrighted guards? Time did not permit of any elaborate plan being formed of changing the truth of God into a lie. Something had to be done at once. Already rumours were finding their way through unknown sources to the affrighted people. What would happen if these knew the real state of affairs? Scarce knowing what they did, they collected a considerable sum of money and gave it to the soldiers. "You will testify," they said, "that His disciples came by night and stole away the Body while you were asleep, and if the governor come to know of it, we will appease him and secure you." The soldiers, taking the money, did as they were told, but their bribers over-reached themselves, for if the soldiers were asleep, how could they tell that the disciples came and stole the Body, and if they were awake, why not prevent the theft? Unfortunately or fortunately the apostles were not the men to dare the sabres of the Roman soldiers, asleep or awake. At the first sound of the coming storm they fled Gethsemane, and left Jesus in the midst of His enemies. Even before His cause was altogether lost, they abandoned Him, and their leader, perhaps the most courageous of them all, quaked at the sound of a woman's voice, and swore that he knew not Jesus. And were these the men to steal or take by force the dead Body of Jesus from a sepulchre, sealed by authority, and guarded by the hated and dreaded Roman soldiers? Why, if this had been done, Imperial Rome would have had the lives, both of apostles and of soldiers, as an atonement to her honour, outraged in the delinquent persons of her own legionaries. But the words of the angel are true, "He is risen," "He is not here." The apostles saw and spoke with Him in His risen Body, and this is why they proclaimed so fearlessly, so continuously, so enthusiastically amidst suffering, and disgrace, and death, this central dogma of our holy faith—the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

BENEDICT DONEGAN, C.P.

In Thanksgiving, Etc.

Per Very Rev. Fr. Rector, C.P. (Enniskillen), two pounds and ten shillings have been received towards the expenses of the Canonization of Blessed Gabriel.

Sr. M. A. Joachim (St. Louis Convent, Louisville, Monaghan) sends one pound towards the expenses of the Canonization of Gemma Galgani.

G. S. (Leinster Road, Rathmines) sends two-and-sixpence towards the expenses of Canonization of Blessed Gabriel, and the same amount towards Canonization of Gemma Galgani.

C. Mullaly (Dublin) sends one shilling towards the Cause of Gemma Galgani.

Anonymous sends one shilling towards the Cause of Blessed Gabriel and Gemma Galgani.

The above donations, for which we are sincerely grateful, will be duly forwarded to the Postulator at Rome.

Contributions towards the expenses of the Causes of Blessed Gabriel and Gemma Galgani and favours received through their intercession will be gladly acknowledged in these pages.

The Soldier Soul.

THE cruel fate that had laid him low in that week, too feeble to do anything more than indicate to his father where his gun lay, and see his sister hurriedly strap it to the shoulders of a comrade—all dimly, as in a dream! Cruel fate, that left him to lie helplessly raving when the hour had come!

And then the bitter, empty days of convalescence, and the still more unbearable return to the routine of life, unharmed and safe, with all the familiar faces gone. To eat, to lie softly, to know comfort. Oh, grief!

And now the boys were coming home—some ill, some well, some with a crutch, some with pinched faces, some with bullet-marks, all with pride, glad, sure of their welcome; their courage and pride reflected in the eyes of their wives and sweethearts. With burning eyes and beating heart, and a pain that was not to be assuaged, he, too, bent forward amid the clustering heads and listened to the oft-told tale of how it was done, how they suffered, how they fought, how his gallant commander fell.

And he had no share in it. Oh, the pain, the sense of loss; the daily anguish! He could not eat or sleep. He grew thin and pale. He complained of no bodily ailment, but a gnawing pain was eating out his heart. A melancholy he could not shake off settled over him. He had to leave work. The doctor said it was a general debility, the effect of his old complaint of the lungs. But his mother shook her head doubtfully, and the priest said nothing. He grew daily worse, worse and worse.

One morning he was lying very still, alone in his room in bed, feeling very weak. It was a bright, sunny morning. The window was open, and a soft wind blowing from the south, straight across the Dublin Mountains, now and then stirred the curtains. He could hear a faint murmur of voices in the next room, and far away the vague rumble of the city. The sound of the wind was growing more persistent. All other sounds seemed to be stilled. Hark, how it blew! rising and falling in gentle cadences. Suddenly it seemed to be mingling with another sound. Was it the tramp of feet—of marching men? It came nearer and nearer. He sprang out of bed and looked out of the window. A body of men in green uniforms were passing by. His old company! With a laugh of surprise he turned away and hastily began to fling on his own uniform and kit. They were there, all ready to his hand. He felt a bit weak first, but as he proceeded he grew stronger—his bandolier, his water-bottle, his blanket, his haversack,

his rifle; it was full kit. The perspiration broke over him with the exertion. As he passed through the next room he saw his mother cutting up a loaf. He paused while she filled his haversack. Then he kissed her and went out the door. On the stairs he met his father and sister. They looked into his eyes, but did not ask to stop him. He heard their "God-speed" as he lifted the latch.

When he gained the street he saw his company away in front. He felt stronger. He whistled a soldier's song as he stepped out to catch up on them. How they walked! He hastened his own foot-steps, but he seemed to get no nearer. How they walked! Tramp, tramp, tramp. Was it a forced march? He broke into a run, and at length, catching up, fell into step. Yes, they were marching quickly. As they marched they did not sing, for singing wastes the breath, but went forward with grave, calm faces, their eyes alert, their mouths set in determination. Now and then they smiled.

March, march. People dressed in holiday clothes passed them here and there. Now and then a cheery shout or a friendly wave of the hand greeted them from a group of men, or a nod or a smile from a knot of girls. First he thought they were going into the country. But, no; it was a detour of the city.

Halt! They had stopped at a dead wall. They were joined by another company, then another and another. Quietly and quickly they came. And now he saw a beloved figure moving about among the officers, rapidly reviewing the little force. How his own accoutrement weighed him down! He must brace himself. Hark! was that the crack of guns?

The officers were still consulting. The sound of their voices reached his ears as if someone, unseen, were whispering into them. He listened intently. Then it was true—these were the commands—it was—it was—?

His aching heart bounded, his weak limbs revived, all his sadness fell away from him. There was going to be a roll-call. While he awaited his turn the eyes of his commander fell on him and smiled into his own. "Courage, heart!" they seemed to say. They were hardly the eyes of the living. It was as if their souls had met. Then he knew it was the day and the hour.

The call was proceeding—the response to which would be the symbol of his readiness for the complete sacrifice. A great peace settled over him, and when his turn came it was in a calm, clear voice he answered, "Here!" And then he sighed.

At the loud, strong cry all the family ran into the room. He lay there very still, warm, with the perspiration still wet on his brow, but with his eyes softly closed, and his face calm and untroubled, smiling in death. His soul had gone out.

EMILY DOWLING.

"You cannot make the Bird Sing."

"YOU cannot make the bird sing," whilst the most pathetic thought to be conceived, is yet full of compensation, as all life is, in the minds of those who *think*. There are some people in this world whose desire is to make other people happy, but with this flooring condition—the other people's happiness must follow their own idea of happiness—the bee-line of their limited sight. That is all very well from their point of view, but it takes the whole ground from the real happy-making—and not only this, but it robs of merit the desire and effort of these persons to gladden their neighbours—nay, their family.

Being oblivious of what is wanting in the map and table they have made for others, or like an ostrich hiding from the fact, they wonder that no result of happiness ensues. By persistent obstinacy they continue to ladle out the same records and expect a corresponding tone to result. How much one sees of this! How infinitely wasteful and evil-spreading it is. I use these strong terms with deliberation—evil comes with the crushing out of the song of life. We were all born to sing some of our days—and each has a note given them. Like my birds, the individual note is there—the goldfinch's and the canary's. The goldfinch is nimble, very tiny and thin, with an eye of merriment as he flits from perch to perch; his predominant note is one of frivolity, for he says distinctly to me, "I'll squeeze you," a very incarnation of good spirits, and the *joie de vivre*. "Pincher" is well-named, and his harmony in red and gold, black and mole, with tiny white streaks, seems to make him a cosmopolitan of woods and fields—for his nature is wild and free—a most winning little personality, full of character and nous.

The gold canary with his Joey name, is handsome and black-eyed, with some dignity, and great good-nature, he has the slower movements of the warmer countries, and has a very responsive nature, for gifts and attention most grateful; he returns in full measure with a wealth of song long and joyous, with Trebelli trills and speaking sounds. His plumage is radiantly lovely, from deep daffodil to creamiest white his feathers shade away; he is the pet of the whole house, and knows it too.

Neither Pincher nor Joey will utter a note by force or obligation. You may whistle or sing yourself; you may tempt with fruit or sugar; they look and wonder at your efforts; and most emphatically say—no song to-day. It is

no small wonder that no power on earth can move that little throat to sing for you if the owner does not want it. Where is the resisting power? Innate in that little feathered body is a tiny will and it is like a very fortress of fixed resistance. But let God's sun come out, let the leaves wave in the mid-day heat, let the gnats dance in' the beam, then there bursts a flood of song unbroken and varied like the rainbow's hues. Perhaps the feathers and wings hung all drooping and moping and sad before—mewed up in a cage away from the light, or with deadly quiet of a grey drab room where the most bubbling spirits flag—a cheery voice comes in and the little songster lives once more.

It is an inveterate idea that each character should be answered *not* according to his own individual appeal, but that there should be a spoonful of treacle ladled out all round and invariably it proves Squeers' brimstone to many.

I never forget a poem I read in the *Expository Times*—I think it was anonymous—it was called "The House of Too Much Trouble"—the pathos was *terrible*—no other expression would suffice for the striking sorrow it produces in the reader—it is an instance of this flagrant mental cruelty. It is about a child brought up in a house of super-neatness, the dwellers wherein live for the furniture and for the order of the day. I will give two verses:—

" In the house of too much trouble
Lived a lonely little boy :
He was eager for a playmate,
He was hungry for a toy.

" But 'twas *always* ' too much trouble,'
' Too much dirt,' and ' too much noise
For the house of ' too much trouble '
Wasn't meant for little boys.

" And sometimes the little fellow
Left a book upon the floor,
Or forgot and laughed too loudly,
Or he failed to close the door.
In the house of ' too much trouble '
There was little room for him.

" Every room is set in order,
Every book is in its place,
And the lonely little fellow
Wears a smile upon his face.
In the house of ' too much trouble '
He is silent and at rest—
In the house of ' too much trouble '
With a lily at his breast."

No one could make him sing—his little soul and heart were sick for loneliness and misplaced attention—*misunderstood*.

That poem is a photograph of countless souls lonely for happiness—lonely for their own development—lonely for the love they need. No matter what pains are taken, what feast is spread before them, their eyes are averted and away—their heart is scarcely beating—their legs and arms and tongue are working, but really their clock has stopped. As a clever young cleric once said in the pulpit, " Somehow they propel themselves along"—and no one knows but themselves how they inwardly cry because they cannot sing. You cannot bring happiness unless you find the cause for it—and no amount of fiddle-playing will cheer anyone who wants peace of attainment, and sleep cometh not to the creature craving rest who is lain on a bed of bristles—no matter how you rock them or how the instrument is stringed.

Let us think of some of the birds we have read of who could not be made to sing—those we have known who are living songless lives in the captor's hands—with a bright face perhaps, but no joy within—we know they exist in numbers too great to count—feeding on the longing of their hearts—with eyes ever straining for the vision of their love, or maybe with the intellect's thirst unquenched or the vocation not followed—though the whisper has come from God.

It were better far that those who keep a soul from singing that they should never be born—they have a millstone round their neck—which will prevent their eternal singing.

Is there anything more pitiful than trying to make a sunless life laugh? Like King Cophetua, one may offer a kingdom at their feet, but the laugh would not come. No more forcible means of realisation could be of our powerlessness than this inability "to make the bird sing." This is one of the many things absolutely in God's power alone. It were as well to bring to life a withered flower than to cause music in the feathered throat. There is something sinister and wondrously marvellous in the overwhelming sense one feels of *utter* dwindling annihilation of our puny selves before a tiny daisy-bud or a bird in a gilt cage. You may take the daisy—Wordsworth's daisy—and try to open its little life, you have a Sèvres vase, the nectar distilled, it will never open—and why? Alfred Noyes says it takes "the Everlasting Love" to make a rose—and Wordsworth addresses the daisy thus:—

" Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs.
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs
That she may sun thee.
Whole Summer-fields are thine by right;
And Autumn, melancholy wight!
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee."

In power we are slight as the veriest pollen on the flower's leaf when we vie with God and Nature, and so when we chirrup to the unhappy nightingale in our home and expect to hear it sing, try as we may, the only thing to do is to set it free:—

"O Nightingale! thou surely art
A creature of a fairy heart:
These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!"

"Tumultuous harmony"—Wordsworth knows—harmony—a human soul is the deepest, richest, greatest gift of God—stupendous, supreme in His sight. This soul (with its beating heart) comes from His spheres of music to cause harmony to ascend to Him—each soul knows the song it must sing, or pine and die, and if we strike the wrong notes for its music to come forth—which would God wish to hear—a discord? An artificial roundelay, empty "tinkling cymbals?" Is not silence grander? Yes, it is—but the silence madly hurts, and what is worse than all—God is listening in vain—and He knows who is stifling His precious little bird, for has He not counted all their heads?

EDITH PEARSON.

The Angel of Forgetting.

Comes to the border of the land
Where sorrow's sea is fretting,
And smooths the ridges with his hand,
The Angel of forgetting.

He waits at every fall of night
As fades the daylight setting,
On tired eyes lays pinions light . . .
Dear Angel of forgetting.

So respite comes to eyes that weep,
New force and new begetting;
"He giveth his beloved sleep . . ."
The Angel of forgetting.

He stands at last, when life is o'er,
Eternally indebted . . .
With things forgot on Heaven's shore,
Sweet Angel of forgetting.

MOTHER ST. JEROME.

Coif na Teine.

Tá cúpla fóid mōna 'sá scup aí an tene an m̄i reo ag Maine
Pléimeann, An Clocaí, i gCappa Droma Ruirc, agur
CÚPLA ag Rita Caplor, o Béal an Áta, i gCo. Muineach agur
FÓID. táró go deap agur go slan agur go rímpírde. Táin
deimhneac go mbéid na leigheasí go leip lán-trápta
leo agur go mbéid rúil aca le mórlán eile de'n trádar céadna.
Suíte fada buan an bheirt do cuipe cuigí iad!
* * * * *

Ag r̄o na giotai deara do fuaimear o Rita Caplor. Tá moladó
MOLADÓ móri do'n Saeóilis ionta agur cónarlaíle aí leara
MÓR. báinn go leip.

1.

Milír an teanga an Saeóilis
Sut gan cabairi coisgeáide,
Síorí geap-cáoin gile garta,
Suairc, rímirde, rult-blasta.

11.

A Connlaíodh tú na Saeóilge, a Connlaíodh uafail, spáðais,
Cuirimír te céile go rúit agur go bádach,
Cruinnísmír le céile gac géas agur gac ball,
Cum tróda aí ron aí vteangan fém o Cleirí go Dún na nGall.

111.

Níl duine 'gáinn nac féidir leip a beag nō 'móri do páid,
i vteangan binn ná héimeam le spáðaim vi gac lá,
Le cion, le cíordá, le duitract, i mbóit, i mbriúisean, i gceall—
Cloirfeap fuaim aí vteangan fém o Cleirí go Dún na nGall!

* * * * *

Ói peap i n-a gcomhurde i dtiobháid Árainn fado, agur ói mac
aige dapb' ainn Tomáirín. Ba milleac an tmeáin e
SSÉILÍN Tomáirín, agur biond ré i gcomhurde ag déanam iud
MÁIRE. éigín aí an mbealac. Ba deacain reáram leip aí cop
aí bit. Biond ré i gcomhurde, gcomhurde ag bhríeadh i
ag ríphóicead, agur iomáda buille do buailtide aí aí i gcaiteamh
an láe. Aict ní pairb' aon mait ann aí daoi aí bit; b' é an buadaith
céadna é, ba éuma cia deacán ag bhráigí aí. Téigeadh ré aí fgoil,
lá no 'rón éocccigeas, agur biond an máláisítear fgoile i n
buacáillidh beaga ciapca aige an lá nō an tó lá fín fém. Buadaith
báipe do ói ann go eminte, agur ói a fíor fín ag gaoi into bume.
Saoil a atáin i ndéimeadó na dala náid buadaith ceapt a ói ainn aí
cop aí bit. Agur b'féróipí go pairb' an ceapt aige. Déimeadó an

tácaír Éadmunn gup toga rí a beadh ann ar ball, ám, agus ná
náibh docear ar bith ann, acht gup b'f adáine é ná buacaillirde beaga
eile. Ní náibh neart ag Tomáirín docht ar fín. Sin é mo chuidim-
re pé rgeal é.

Seo, bí Tomáirín lá ar fgoil, agus an uairi connaic pé ná náibh
rúil an mairgírtípí aip, d'éalúis ré go meap amac an doipar. Ar
go brat leir go dtí an baile móí, marí a náibh aonac ar riubal an
lá fin. Connaic pé a stáip íp a mácaíp annpom poimé, acht ní
facaodh riú Tomáirín. O'fan ré ag fáil oppa go séap go
bfaaca pé ag dul ipteac 'fan ópta ba ghoipe do iao. Rit ré abaire
leir fém annpom. "Nac agam a bérí an gheann ra baile," aip
reipean leir fém, "agus gan iao fomam." Seo leir abaire aip a
diseall. Agus é ag teact i ngap do'n tig, connaic pé sé 'na rurde
ar nro. Tábhanc ré amac i gan truas, agus ipteac leir abaire.
Fuaipi an bteannac cliaib annpom, agus buail pé béal faoi aip
an uplár e. "Ipteac leat-ra fán sciliab annpom," aip reipean
leir an ngé. "Go scúipfidh mé copcaín uisce aip an dtéime, if go
mbe iubhaoír beo bealtuigte tú."

Agus an copcaín uisce aip cíocadh ór ciomh na teime aige, tuit cluas
ar an gceopeán, agus doibhíteadh an t-uisce aip fudo an uplár.
Annpm ní náibh aon ait típm le riubal aige, agus if beag ná
náibh pé bárdte. Ní náibh pé i bfaid marí fin, marí ba cliste an
buacaill e. O'fearc pé taistiméall, agus connaic pé cípíla
ceipílin phátarde aip cléip i n-aice na fumneoidse.

Táinig fmaoineadh 'na ceann gan moill. Ruig ré aip na ceipílinib,
agus eait pé ceann aca annro agus ceann annpúr aip fudo an uplár,
ag témhí s ó ceipílin go ceipílin, if iao ag juc uard com luat if
cumhigeadh pé leo. Agus é ag témhí s cap uisce marí feo, do furgad
go séap ó'n taoibh tiap aip. Nuairí d'iompuis ré taist, cia bí aip a
mum, acht an gé, ná an gannóil, ba cónaí dom a nád. Rit Tomáirín
an 'opar amac aip a díseall, agus fghannfaidh eipíde aip; faoil ré
go náibh an gé mucta aige if gup eipíis ní beo aipí. Dípeac agus é
ag dul amac an doipar, cia beadh poimé acht a stáip, agus é ag
teact abaire ó'n aonac. D'fín é an t-am do táinig an fáitcior
aip da rípib. Bí an t-stáip docht aip buile gian 'nuairí connaic pé
an diosgbáil a bí déanta ag a mac, agus seallamh-re dib gup tús
ré fghluaiseadh do. D'éapfann fém gup beag le luad an diosgbáil
uile; acht marí deip an t-abhrán biond 'ré marí fin.

Táinig beagáin cíille do Tomáirín de báppi a tufair agus ba
móí an gprád Dé fin.

Béaróid beara eile agam dib an mi feo cuigíann, le congnam Dé
MUIRIS NA MÓNA.



A Literary Circle for Young Readers of
"The Cross."

Conducted by FRANCIS.

RULES OF THE GUILD.

I. The Guild of Blessed Gabriel is a literary circle open to boys and girls under 18 years of age.

II. The members will be expected to spread devotion to Blessed Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, by practising the virtues of purity, charity and truth: and by living lives worthy of him who is to be their model and guide.

III. They will at all times observe the conditions under which the competitions will be held.

IV. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into the Guild of Blessed Gabriel.

A PRIL of the smiles and tears, of the sighs and laughter, has come
upon us unawares, and has whispered softly in our ear that the winter
is over and past, that summer, with its gladness and glory and
warmth, is marching over the hills to meet us, that spring is here. It has
been a long winter, dark and cold and pitiless, but to all things ugly there is
an end: it is only the beauty of God that lives forever. The things and
the nations that are near to God, that bear for sake of His smile all the
sufferings and hardships that a passing world can impose upon them, will
live eternally in the sunshine of His Presence. That is the message that
Easter sets singing in our hearts, bidding us remember that certain ugly
things we have good reason to know are nearing their doom, and that
Caitlin Ni Uallachain is about to walk into the warmth of the sunshine at
last. Praise and glory be to God.

In the glory and joy of the coming Easter morn, when all your hearts are
filled with a sweet content which you cannot describe

Remember. or understand, in that hour of exaltation and holy
pleasure, remember another Easter and pray for the

souls of those whose hearts felt an uplifting that was even greater and nobler,
and who, strengthened and transfigured by it, walked unfalteringly and
proudly along the path made holy by the footsteps of martyrs, and laid down
their lives for you and for me. Pray for them, and pray a fervent prayer of
gratitude to God that our land is still capable of giving birth to and nurturing
such men as they have proved themselves to be. An Easter of joy and peace
and happiness to you all!

The foregoing words had just been set on paper when your dear friend,
and mine, **Lillian Nally**, sent me an Easter thought

My Post Bag. running in the very same channel. Here is what
she has written:—“Easter of glorious memories is
here! In our hearts let us shrine the names of the great beloved martyred
ones who answered with their bleeding hearts the rallying cry of an oppressed

nation. Let us pray for them, for it is the best way to keep their memory alive—that starlight memory which will guide us on through the tempestuous sea of unrest—

‘ Till hope has reached its haven, till gloom and grief are gone;
And freemen’s hands may fashion the name and fame on high,
Of all who trod that pathway and showed the way to die.’

Now that you and I have asked for those prayers, Lilian dear, there is little likelihood of their being left unsaid. Many a fervent prayer will be breathed for our noble dead in many a foreign land also when Easter morning dawns. Their sacrifice has stirred all that is best in freedom-loving hearts the wide world over. Thanks to **Eibhlis Seoighe** for her affectionate message. I was sorry to learn that she had not been too well. In fact, the ills that come with rude and March have been paying a visit to very many of us, and to poor **Francis** himself, whose eyes are paining him so much as he pens these words that he can hardly see the paper. The members, I am sure, will not feel aggrieved if the comments on their letters are not as many or as lengthy as usual, on that account. Our little friend and earnest worker in England, **Mary Rennie**, has also been so ill that she could not attend school for several days. I sincerely trust that by the time Easter morning comes all our little pains and aches will have passed away, and our hearts be as glad and buoyant as they ought to be at that beautiful season. Mary and her sister, **Nellie Rennie**, have not failed to write their usual pleasing letters, and I am exceedingly grateful to both. Nellie asks the prayers of her fellow-members for a special intention. The **Presentation Convent, Drogheda**, has stormed the Guild in full force this month. Such a “big push” has never been known here before. From the lowest to the highest standards this famous school joined in the attack, and the result was that **Francis** was simply overwhelmed. The Commander-in-Chief—**Ada O’Neill**—opened fire with the following:—“ You had better provide yourself with a chair, Francis, lest this blowing-up should prove too much for you. In the Guild some months ago I believe you insinuated that Drogheda was boasting, because we declared that we should always be ‘first in the field’ in supplying recruits to the Guild of Blessed Gabriel. Behold, we are now despatching another Expeditionary Force, numbering some thirty-one youthful Droghedians, who desire and demand admittance to your genial society. So you may hide your diminished head for the rest of your days, and never attempt to ‘sit’ on the ancient borough and county town of Drogheda again.” The volley continues like that for three pages of foolscap, and the bombardment is kept up with intensified force in **forty-two other letters**, in which I am pelted with Chinese babies, Easter eggs, threepenny bits, Friday tickets, head inspectors, and several other missiles of an equally dangerous and destructive nature, until, after a desperate and stubborn resistance, I am forced to yield under the pressure of superior numbers. And then, as balm and healing for my wounds, this is handed to me on a silver salver:—“ Seriously, Francis, we are delighted beyond words at the enthusiasm of the children here, and at the numbers that flock to the Guild. The little ones are all agog with excitement when each new number of ‘**The Cross**’ arrives, to see what the competitions are, and in a very few days afterwards bulky packages are carried up to St. Angela’s by some little Guilder, who announces that these are the letters to Francis from St. Anne’s or St. Brigid’s. This is a reminder to us, big people, who generally wait until the last moment for competing.” The **Presentation Convent, Drogheda**, is the most beautiful spot in all the world; its pupils are the mildest, most loving, most learned, least boasting children from here to China and back again. There! is that enough? If it isn’t I’ll search the dictionary for bigger words of praise or go down to Blarney and kiss the famous stone, or carry out any other penance that Commander O’Neill may see fit to impose. (But I wonder what will Carrick-on-Shannon say!) The names of the recruits from Drogheda are: Brighid Ni Bhriain, Sinead Ni Bhriain, Maighread Ni Chleirigh, Proinseas Maitin, Maire Ni Mhainin, Alice Reilly, Mary Kelly, Monica Shieds, Kathleen Lynch, Mary McVeigh, Brigid Manning, Jane Healy, Lizzie Monaghan, Mary Hoey, Eileen McAllister, Michael McAllister, Kathleen McGuirk, Mary King, Clare McEvoy, Eileen O’Farrell, Lily Jones, Muriel Jones, Kathleen Deane, Lizzie Carey, Maggie Callan, Julia Collins, Jane Craven, Rose Callan, Rita Kierans, Kitty Dolan, and Clare McEvoy. The heartiest of hearty welcomes to them one and all. Molaim go mor **Eibhlis Ni Raghallaigh** agus **Sighle Ni Bhriain** mar gheall ar na litreacha deasa Gaedhilge do scriodr cugham. Mo cheol iad! From the historic city of Armagh comes a new member, **Kathleen Donnelly**, to whom I extend a warm welcome. From the West comes **May MacMahon**, who has been recruited by our industrious comrade, **Rita Carlos**. A hearty welcome to

May! **Christie Burke** is becoming a humourist. “ I am sending you a ‘scrap of paper,’ ” she writes, “ and hope it will not meet with the same fate as the Home Rule Bill.” I was delighted with every line of Chrissie’s letter. Did she send an essay? If she did, it must have gone astray, because it hasn’t reached me. A very interesting letter, written in as neat handwriting as I have ever seen, came from **Kathleen Nelson**, of Rainhill, Lancashire. She is very proud of her connection with the Guild. **Margaret P. Keogh** sends me a St. Patrick’s Day card, and asks the prayers of the members for her intention. I was well pleased with the spirited letter written by **Katie Doyle**. I trust **Kathleen Savage** has received her prize volume by this time, and that her mind is at rest.

The Editor desires me to say that his supply of Blessed Gabriel Badges is exhausted, and that he expects a new lot soon.

Our Badges.

Badge winners may rest assured that they will receive their pretty trophies in due course. For recruiting five new members each, Badges are awarded to **Sighle Ni Bhriain**, **May Carroll**, **Ellie Clarke**, **Rita McAllister**, and **Kitty Boylan**, all of Presentation Convent, Drogheda.

(1) All newcomers will please write a personal note to **Francis**, apart from their competition papers, asking to be admitted to membership of the Guild. (2) Always put your name and address on your competition paper, whether you send a letter or not.

An overwhelming entry in both competitions again this month. My heart is as high as a mountain with joy. For the best essay on “Easter and its Legends,” the prize goes to **Ada O’Neill**, Presentation Convent, Drogheda, whose nice, simply-worded paper will be read with pleasure.

For the best letter on “Easter,” the prize is awarded to **Kathleen Donnelly**, Tullyard House, Armagh.

Members Under 12.

[Pressure on space obliges us to omit the long list of names specially mentioned.—Editor, “The Cross.”]

OUR NEXT COMPETITION.

I.—For Members over 12 and under 18 years of age.

A handsome book prize will be awarded for the best essay on “The Coming of the Maytime.”

II.—For Members under 12 years of age.

A handsome book prize will be offered for the best letter on “My Favourite Song-bird.”

All competitors will please remember the following rules:—All competition papers must be certified by some responsible person as being the **unaided** and **original work** of the competitors. They must have attached to them the coupon which will be found in this issue (one coupon will be sufficient for all the members of a family), and must be written on one side only of the paper. They must be sent so as to reach the office not later than by the **first post** on April 14th. All letters to be addressed: **Francis**, c/o “The Cross,” St. Paul’s Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin.

PRIZE ESSAY.

Easter and its Legends.

Out on the lonely hillside, or in the seclusion of some shady wood, one can see that the advent of some great festival is drawing near. The perfume of the wood-violets rises like incense in the air, hosts of beautiful flowers are swaying gracefully on their slender stems, and daily the tender, green shoots are opening and disclosing new treasures to view. The birds have returned from their temporary exile to sing their outbursts of happiness and exultation, and to raise men’s hearts to something higher than mere earthly beauty. All nature’s subjects are doing their utmost to gladden the world and make it beautiful, in preparation for Easter, the most glorious festival of the year. How then must men, who are the special objects of Our Saviour’s love and solicitude, rejoice in the commemoration of this great day—this “day which the Lord hath made,” and on which it is our duty “to rejoice and be glad therein”?

The name Easter is probably derived from the old word Oster, which signifies rising, because nature arises from her long winter slumber in spring. Others maintain that it is derived from the name of the feast of the Teutonic goddess, Ostera, which was celebrated by the ancient Saxons early in spring, and for which the first missionaries wisely substituted the Christian feast.

It is only to be expected that numerous legends, associated with both heathen and Catholic customs, are handed down to us from the misty past; all relating to the great festival. One which seems to have existed since the first Easter morn is that of the sun dancing. According to tradition, the sun, whose rays had been hidden from the world for three days, while Jesus lay in the tomb, rose in wondrous splendour on that eventful morn; and actually danced for joy, in honour of the day. Despite the pooh-poohs of modern astronomers, there are many in this enlightened world who still wait at break of day to catch a glimpse of the sun dancing, as he first emerges on Easter morning.

Another beautiful legend runs thus: Masses of bluebells clustered near the tomb, wherein lay the body of Jesus, but unlike those which we now see, held their cups up and watched the sky with serene, blue eyes. Startled by the unearthly sounds which made "the guards become as dead men," they looked in surprise, but instantly bent their heads in lowly reverence before the infinite glory of their Creator. No triumphal clash of cymbals greeted this mighty Lord; all was still, save the soft music of the angels, which trembled in the pulsating air. Suddenly a sweet chime of bells broke the silence, and the tiny bluebells tinkled their greeting of Alleluias to the Lord. It also happened that, wherever the sacred feet of Jesus touched the ground, stately white lilies sprang up, while they also crowded round the entrance to the tomb, so that, when the holy women came, they had to draw back this curtain of flowers before they could enter.

This legend goes on to tell us that on Easter morning, when Our Lady was communing with her God, while her soul was filled with the desolation of agony, she was made aware of Our Saviour's presence and heard His voice exclaiming, "My Mother, peace be to you," as He gave her the kiss of love upon the forehead. At the same time some bluebells, which St. John had gathered to deck the chamber of his adopted mother, pealed out the sweet refrain which has since been known as the "Regina Coeli." Waking to find her newly-risen Son before her, she joyfully greeted Him:

"O Love, my heart is ready, I will rise;
My heart is ready for the Paschal singing.
For on my face Thy risen glory lies,
And in my ears Thy notes of love are ringing."

We are also told that when St. Patrick arrived at the Hill of Slane on Easter Eve he prepared to light the Paschal fire. Now, the king was engaged in a ceremony, in which he was to light the first fire at Tara, and when he beheld the blaze on the Hill of Slane he consulted his druids, who told him that, if the intruder's fire were not extinguished that night, it would never be extinguished, but he who kindled it would overthrow the kingdom. Which prophecy, if true, has indeed been verified.

Formerly in the Church of St. Mary Major in Rome, when the priest turned to the people on Easter morn, saying, "Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum," there was no response. It would appear that on one occasion a choir of heavenly voices responded, while the earthly choir remained silent with awe. Next year they remained waiting for the angelic response, but there was none; and so this lack of response continued for three centuries.

Another legend tells us that in some countries it was customary for the priest on Easter morning to kiss an image of the newly-risen Christ. He then bestowed a kiss upon the most important man of the assembly, saying, "The Lord has risen," and the man would answer, "He has truly risen." In like manner, the first man would kiss the next in seniority, and so on until the whole congregation had taken part in the ceremony. Not even here would it end, but out in the streets friends on meeting would kiss one another with the same salutation for three days. This may seem a somewhat foolish proceeding, but in reality it was not so; for it signified that peace and love should reign in all hearts at Eastertide, and enemies chose this opportunity of being publicly reconciled. This legend must have some foundation, for this Easter custom exists in Poland to the present day.

In these and all other legends there is a happy blending of truth and fancy. Most of us accept them simply as somewhat quaint, if entertaining stories, and do not realise that very many of them are historical facts garbed in a fascinating attire. In all likelihood the thrilling events of our time will be hazily viewed by indifferent eyes in the course of two or three centuries, and the episode of last Easter week will, perchance, be related to a yet unborn generation as an Easter legend.

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ADA O'NEILL (16 years).